Numb. 155

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

——— *Aliena Negotia curat*
Excuſſus propriis. ——— Hor.

From *Tueſday April* 4. to *Thurſday April* 6. 1710.

From my own Apartment, April 5.

THERE lived ſome Years ſince within my Neighbourhood a very grave Perſon, an Upholſterer, who ſeemed a Man of more than ordinary Application to Buſineſs. He was a very early Riſer, and was often abroad Two or Three Hours before any of his Neighbours. He had a particular Carefulneſs in the knitting of his Brows, and a Kind of Impatience in all his Motions, that plainly diſcovered he was always intent on Matters of Importance. Upon my Enquiry into his Life and Converſation, I found him to be the greateſt Newſmonger in our Quarter; that he roſe before Day to read the *Poſt-Man*; and that he would take Two or Three Turns to the other End of the Town before his Neighbours were up, to ſee if there were any *Dutch* Mails come in. He had a Wife and ſeveral Children, but was much more inquiſitive to know what paſſed in *Poland* than in his own Family, and was in greater Pain and Anxiety of Mind for King *Auguſtus*'s Welfare, than that of his neareſt Relations. He looked extremely thin in a Dearth of News, and never enjoyed himſelf in a Weſterly Wind. This indefatigable Kind of Life was the Ruin of his Shop; for about the Time that his Favourite Prince left the Crown of *Poland*, he broke and diſappeared.

This Man and his Affairs had been long out of my Mind, till about Three Days ago, as I was walking in St. *James*'s Park, I heard ſome body at a Diſtance hemming after me: And who ſhould it be but my old Neighbour the Upholſterer? I ſaw he was reduced to extreme Poverty, by certain ſhabby Superfluities in his Dreſs: For notwithſtanding that it was a very ſultry Day for the Time of the Year, he wore a looſe great Coat and a Muff, with a long Campagne-Wig out of Curl; to which he had added the Ornament of a Pair of black Garters buckled under the Knee. Upon his coming up to me, I was going to enquire into his preſent Circumſtances; but was prevented by his asking me with a Whiſper, Whether the laſt Letters brought any Accounts that one might rely upon from *Bender*? I told him, None that I heard of; and asked him, Whether he had yet married his eldeſt Daughter? He told me, No. But pray, ſays he, tell me ſincerely, What are your Thoughts of the King of *Sweden*? For tho' his Wife and Children were ſtarving, I found his chief Concern at preſent was for this great Monarch. I told him, That I looked upon him as one of the firſt Heroes of the Age. But pray, ſays he, Do you think there is any Thing in the Story of his Wound? And finding me ſurpriſed at the Queſtion, Nay, ſays he, I only propoſe it to you. I anſwered, That I thought there was no Reaſon to doubt of it. But why in the Heel, ſays he, more than in any other Part of the Body? Becauſe, ſays I, the Bullet chanced to light there.

This extraordinary Dialogue was no ſooner ended, but he began to launch out into a long Diſſertation upon the Affairs of the North; and after having ſpent ſome Time on them, he told me, he was in a great Perplexity how to reconcile the *Supplement* with the *Engliſh-Poſt*, and had been juſt now examining what the other Papers ſay upon the ſame Subject. The *Daily Courant*, ſays he, has theſe Words, *We have Advices from very good Hands, That a certain Prince has ſome Matters of great Importance under Conſideration.* This is very myſterious; but the *Poſt-Boy* leaves us more in the Dark; for he tells us, *That there are private Intimations of Meaſures taken by a certain Prince, which Time will bring to Light.* Now the *Poſt-Man*, ſays he, who uſes to be very clear, refers to the ſame News in theſe Words, *The late Conduct of a certain Prince affords great Matter of Speculation.* This certain Prince, ſays the Upholſterer, whom they are all ſo cautious of naming, I take to be —— Upon which, tho' there was no body near us, he whiſpered ſomething in my Ear, which I did not hear, or think worth my while to make him repeat.

We were now got to the upper End of the *Mall*, where were 3 or 4 very odd Fellows ſitting together upon the Bench. Theſe I found were all of them Politicians, who uſed to ſun themſelves in that Place every Day about Dinner-Time. Obſerving them to be Curioſities in their Kind, and my Freind's Acquaintance, I ſat down among them.

The chief Politician of the Bench was a great Aſſerter of Paradoxes: He told us with a ſeeming Concern, That by ſome News he had lately read from *Muſcovy*, it appeared to him, that there was a Storm gathering in the Black Sea, which might in Time do Hurt to the naval Forces of this Nation. To this he added, That for his Part, he could not wiſh to ſee the *Turk* driven out of *Europe*, which he believed could not but be prejudicial to our Woollen Manufacture. He then told us, That he look'd upon thoſe extraordinary Revolutions which had lately happened in theſe Parts of the World, to have riſen chiefly from Two Perſons who were not much talked of; and thoſe, ſays he, are Prince *Menzikoff*, and the Dutcheſs of *Mirandola*. He backed his Aſſertions with ſo many broken Hints, and ſuch a Show of Depth and Wiſdom, that we gave our ſelves up to his Opinions.

The

The Diſcourſe at length fell upon a Point which ſeldom eſcapes a Knot of true-born *Engliſhmen*, Whether, in Caſe of a religious War, the Proteſtants would not be too ſtrong for the Papiſts? This we unanimouſly determined on the Proteſtant Side. One who ſat on my Right Hand, and, as I found by his Diſcourſe, had been in the *Weſt-Indies*, aſſured us, That it would be a very eaſy Matter for the Proteſtants to beat the Pope at Sea; and added, That whenever ſuch a War does break out, it muſt turn to the Good of the *Leeward-Iſlands*. Upon this, one who ſat at the End of the Bench, and, as I afterwards found, was the Geographer of the Company, ſaid, That in Caſe the Papiſts ſhould drive the Proteſtants from theſe Parts of *Europe*, when the worſt came to the worſt, it would be impoſſible to beat them out of *Norway* and *Greenland*, provided the *Northern* Crowns hold together, and the Czar of *Muſcovy* ſtand Neuter.

He further told us for our Comfort, That there were vaſt Tracts of Land about the Pole, inhabited neither by Proteſtants nor Papiſts, and of greater Extent than all the *Roman* Catholick Dominions in *Europe*.

When we had fully diſcuſs'd this Point, my Freind the Upholſterer began to exert himſelf upon the preſent Negotiations of Peace; in which he depoſed Princes, ſettled the Bounds of Kingdoms, and ballanced the Power of *Europe*, with great Juſtice and Impartiality.

I at length took my Leave of the Company, and was going away; but had not been gone 30 Yards, before the Upholſterer hemm'd again after me. Upon his advancing towards me, with a Whiſper, I expected to hear ſome ſecret Piece of News, which he had not thought fit to communicate to the Bench; but inſtead of that, he deſired me in my Ear to lend him Half a Crown. In Compaſſion to ſo needy a Stateſman, and to diſſipate the Confuſion I found he was in, I told him, if he pleaſed, I would give him Five Shillings, to receive Five Pounds of him when the Great Turk was driven out of *Conſtantinople*; which he very readily accepted, but not before he had laid down to me the Impoſſibility of ſuch an Event as the Affairs of *Europe* now ſtand.

This Paper I deſign for the particular Benefit of thoſe worthy Citizens, who live more in a Coffee-houſe than in their Shops, and whoſe Thoughts are ſo taken up with the Affairs of the Allies, that they forget their Cuſtomers.

Several of the laſt Papers not having been printed from the corrected Copy, the Reader is deſired to mark the following Errata *in thoſe of the faulty Impreſſion.*

Errata *in our laſt:* Col. 1. L. 16. *for* hath placed, *read* deſcribes. L. 20. *dele* Pale. Col. 2. L. 10. *for* Life, *read* Light. L. 17. *for* their, *read* the. L. 23. *read* have a good. L. 34. *for* pregnant, *read* frequent. Col 3. L. 59. *for* Habitation, *read* Habitations. L. 66. *for* its, *read* their. L. 69. *dele* even. Laſt Line but 3. *for* the Soul from Ignorance and Vice, *read* them. Col. 4. L. 7. *for* forgot, *read* forget.

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WHereas there is now laid before the Rt. Hon. the Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, by Mr. Francis Hoffman, Propoſals for a more exquiſite Method of Building all Manner of Shipping then was ever yet invented (having perfected a Model) he thinks himſelf obliged to give this Notice to the Publick, that neither they nor he may be impoſed on by a Sort of Projectors, who make a Trade (by getting a Sight or Deſcription of other Mens Models and Invention) of imitating the Original; by which they impoſe on the World, and endeavour to rob the Inventor of his Right and Intereſt in his Performances.

THeſe are to acquaint the Lovers of Art, That the Hon. Baron Schurtz, late Envoy of Hanover, his Collection of Pictures, being of the moſt celebrated Maſters, will be ſold by Auction, this preſent Thurſday, being the 6th Inſtant. The Sale will begin at Ten of the Clock in the Forenoon, at his late Dwelling-Houſe on the Eaſt-Side of St. James's Square (an Harchment being over the Door) where the Pictures may be ſeen, and Catalogues to be had gratis.

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LOſt out of a Houſe in Mancheſter-Court, on the 18th paſt in the Evening, a ſmall Portmantua Trunk, wherein was a Paper Book of Accounts, with ſeveral Writings. Whoever will bring them, or give any Intelligence of them, ſo that they may be had again, to Mr. Standfaſt in the ſame Court, or at his Shop in Weſtminſter-Hall, ſhall have Five Guinea's, without any Queſtions asked.

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